LISTING OF THE CLAIMS

1-20.   (Canceled)

21.   (Previously Presented) A method for handling an issue related to a design of product using a computer a system that allows collaboration between a plurality of users, the method comprising:

storing a question related to the issue, wherein the question is provided by a first user of the plurality of users;

storing an answer related to the question, wherein the answer is provided by a second user of the plurality of users; and

storing a decision made based on the answer, wherein the decision is made by a third user of the plurality of users.

22.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the plurality of users interacts with at least one of the question, the answer, and the decision via a graphical user interface.

23.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

implementing the decision for this issue into the design; and

forming the product from the design.

24.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the storing of the question, the answer, and the decision is in a tool-neutral persistent form.

25.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein each of the question, the answer, and the decision are stored in a separate relational database, the method further comprising:

using foreign keys to maintain associations between each of the question, the answer, and the decision.

26.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21 further comprising:

storing at least one association between at least one of the issue, the question, the answer, and the decision, and another of the issue, the question, the answer, and the decision.

27.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein storing at least one association comprises:

storing an association of the question with the decision along with the question.

28.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein storing at least one association comprises:

storing an association of the answer with the question along with the answer.

29.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein storing at least one association comprises:

storing an association of the decision with the answer along with the decision.

30.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein storing at least one association comprises:

storing an association of the issue with the question.

31.   (Previously Presented) The method of claim 26, wherein there are a plurality of questions related to the issue and a plurality of answers related to the plurality of questions.

32.   (Previously Presented) The method of the claim 31, comprising:

storing an association for each answer of the plurality of answers that indicates that each answer of the plurality of answers is associated with only one question of the plurality of questions.

33.   (Previously Presented) The method of the claim 31, comprising:

storing an association for each question of the plurality of questions that indicates that each question of the plurality of questions is associated with the issue.

34.   (Previously Presented) The method of the claim 31, comprising:

storing an association for each question of the plurality of questions that indicates that each question of the plurality of questions is associated with the decision.